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REPORT NO.

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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SUBJECT Tonaso, National Enterprise, in Nestemice

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1. Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice, near Usti nad Labem, (Tonaso is the abbreviation for "tovarna na sodu" which means soda factory), produced soda and tannins. The plant was set up around 1910 by the United Chemical Works, which had its main offices in Vienna, and by the firm Solvay & Co., in Brussels. The primary reason for building the plant was the fact that Solvay & Co. had developed a new method of producing sodium which resulted in much better quality soda than the Leblanc process, the outmoded method used previously in the United Chemical Works plants in Usti nad Labem and Hrusov /N 49-52, E 18-18/. The United Chemical Works and Solvay & Co. decided to create a new firm for operating the projected new plant. This firm was named the Nestemice Solvay Works, United Chemical Works and Solvay & Company (Nestemice Solvayovy Zovody, Spolek pro Chemickou a hutni vyroby a Solvay & Co.). The plant was built according to plans of Solvay & Company based on their experience.

2. With the inauguration of production in the Tonaso plant in Nestemice, the two soda-producing plants in Usti nad Labem and Hrusov ceased production because the output of the new plant was large enough not only to meet domestic requirements but also to export.

3. The Nestemice Solvay Works remained an independent enterprise during the First Czechoslovak Republic. From October 1938 until April 1945, the plant was under German management. In 1945, the Nestemice plant was placed under the National administration of the United Chemical Works in Prague, and became a branch of that organization in 1946. Through the general management of the United Chemical Works in Prague, the plant was subordinate to the Czechoslovak Chemical Works in Prague II. After the breaking up of the United Chemical Works on 1 January 1950, the Tonaso plant in Nestemice became an independent national enterprise under the Ministry of Chemical Industry, with the main plant in Nestemice and subordinate

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plants in Litomerice /N 50-32, E 14-087 and Lodenice /N 49-57, E 14-097. /See Annex A for location of the main plant; Annex B for plant layout./

4. The Nestemice plant was connected to the Prague-Podmokly railway by its own spur. The plant was situated adjacent to the district highway between Usti nad Labem and Podmokly /N 50-46, E 14-127. This road was in very good condition. The main means of transportation for the plant, however, was the Elbe River. The plant was situated on the banks of the Elbe, and the river was the only means by which the plant could be supplied with adequate quantities of common salt, the plant's main raw material. The plant had its own loading point on the Elbe River, equipped with a crane capable of unloading 1,500 tn. daily. The Elbe River barges loaded with salt were halted directly under the crane and the salt was transported to the plant by means of an 80-m.-long cable way.

5. Transport of the salt by rail was not possible because the plant did not possess adequate rail facilities. The railway tracks leading to the storage areas for salt were so inconveniently located, because of lack of space, that only two freight cars could be unloaded at one time. It was out of the question for the plant to be dependent upon rail transportation alone. Whenever it was necessary to bring salt in by rail, the loaded cars had to unload onto river barges at Usti nad Labem, and the barges went down river to Nestemice. (Such a situation arose after World War II, when the system of supply from the Soviet Zone of Germany was completely disrupted, and salt was transported by rail from West Germany and France.) Consequently, the plant was forced to keep at least a three month supply of salt in storage at all times, due to the frequent unnavigability of the Elbe River. Other vital raw materials such as limestone, chromium ore, etc. were transported to Nestemice by rail. These commodities could not be transported by barge all the way to the plant, because the conveyor belt could only be used for salt.

6. In using all machinery to the utmost capacity, the Nestemice plant needed 180,000 tn. of common salt of 98% NaCl. During normal times, the sole source of this salt for the Nestemice plant was East Germany. Natural sources of raw salt for the Nestemice plant were the salt deposits near Stassfurt in the Soviet Zone of Germany. Salt mined from these deposits was shipped by rail to Schönebeck /N 52-01, E 11-457, transferred to the Elbe River barges and carried by them to Nestemice. Salt was imported under the provisions of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Trade Agreement. The supplier was listed as Sojuzpromexport in Moscow. The price was 168 crowns per ton, F.O.B. Schönebeck, and was payable through the Czechoslovak-Soviet clearing. Salt was imported by the Nestemice plant with no customs and tariffs as was the case for all other chemical works. Salt storage and salt processing was under the control of the Czechoslovak Customs Office. The plant had to apply each year for the necessary permits for the import of salt not subject to tax and duty.

7. Another important foreign raw material for the Nestemice plant was chromium ore. In order to operate at full capacity, the plant needed 1,000 tn. of chromium ore per year. For each of the last few years, and according to import plans for 1953, the Nestemice plant processed 800 tn. of chromium ore for the production of tannins. The price of Soviet chromium ore was 2,000 crowns per ton dry weight, (48% pure Cr_2O_3), franco RR Cerna pri Cope /N 48-26, E 22-067. As in the case of salt, the quality of the chromium ore was first-grade and met all quality requirements of the plant. Payment was through clearing within the policy of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Trade Agreement. Shipper was Sojuzpromexport in Moscow.

8. Other necessary raw products were obtained in Czechoslovakia. Potash was obtained from the caustic potash factory in Kolin, and lime from the limekiln in Lodenice.

9. Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice Main Plant, produced crystal and calcine soda, sodium bicarbonate, sodium bichromate in both ground and crystalline form and potassium bichromate (ground and crystalline form). Finished soda was automatically packed and weighed. It was delivered in paper sacks for further processing by the textile, glass, and soap industries. Sodium bicarbonate was delivered to health departments. Crystal soda was made available for household use through Chemodroga, National Enterprise. Sodium bichromate and potassium bichromate were usually delivered in sacks for the leather, dye, and printing industries, but they were sometimes packed in boxes or crates.

10. The machinery at the plant was old. After the war, a new boiler house was built at the Nestemice plant, since the old facilities were no longer adequate. By 1951, the new boiler facilities were in full operation. Water for the new boiler plant was taken from the Elbe River, into which refuse water also spilled. Scrap and sediment were stored outside the plant area in the direction of Nestemice.

11. There were no plans to expand production at the Nestemice plant as of summer 1952. The Nestemice plant was not producing at full capacity as far as soda was concerned. [redacted] the salt import plan for 1953 called for the import of less salt than the Czechoslovak plants could process if the Nestemice plant were operating at full capacity. 50X1

12. The Nestemice plant had no research department, but had large laboratories where both raw materials and finished products were tested.

13. The plant had about 800 employees. The technical manager until 1948 was the aged specialist, Ing. PESTA. He was replaced in 1948 by Dr. JEZEK, who was in the Novaky Chemical plant during World War II. In 1951, Dr. JEZEK left to work for the Ministry of Chemical Industry in Prague, and he was replaced by a worker manager. Chief of the plant administration was (fnu) NEUWIRTH.

14. Security measures at the plant were the same as in other chemical plants. The plant was enclosed by a wall. Entrance was gained only with permission of the Ministry of Chemical Industry, and workers had special passes to be presented upon entering and leaving the plant. Outside the area, the plant had two storage places in the former Nestemice sugar plant area. Sugar production ceased there after World War II. These storages were used for storage of emergency supplies of salt.

Branch Plant in Litomerice

15. The Tonaso branch plant in Litomerice was, before and during World War II, the property of the German firm, Persil. The plant produced various soap powders. In 1945 the plant was subordinated to the Nestemice Chemical Works, since this firm was the main supplier of soda to the Litomerice plant. Production continued along the same old soap powder formula of the Persil Werke. There were about 50 people employed here.

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Branch Plant in Lodenice

16. The limekilns in Lodenice have always been the property of the Nestemice chemical works. (The fact that the Lodenice plant remained Nestemice works property after World War II and continued to be an auxiliary installation was contrary to normal practice in nationalization policy. The only reason for this was because limekilns in Lodenice almost exclusively supplied the needs of the Nestemice plant alone.) The plant employed about 100 workers and was constantly plagued with a chronic shortage of manpower. The limekilns there were circular.

Annexes:

A. Location of Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice

B. Plant Layout of Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice

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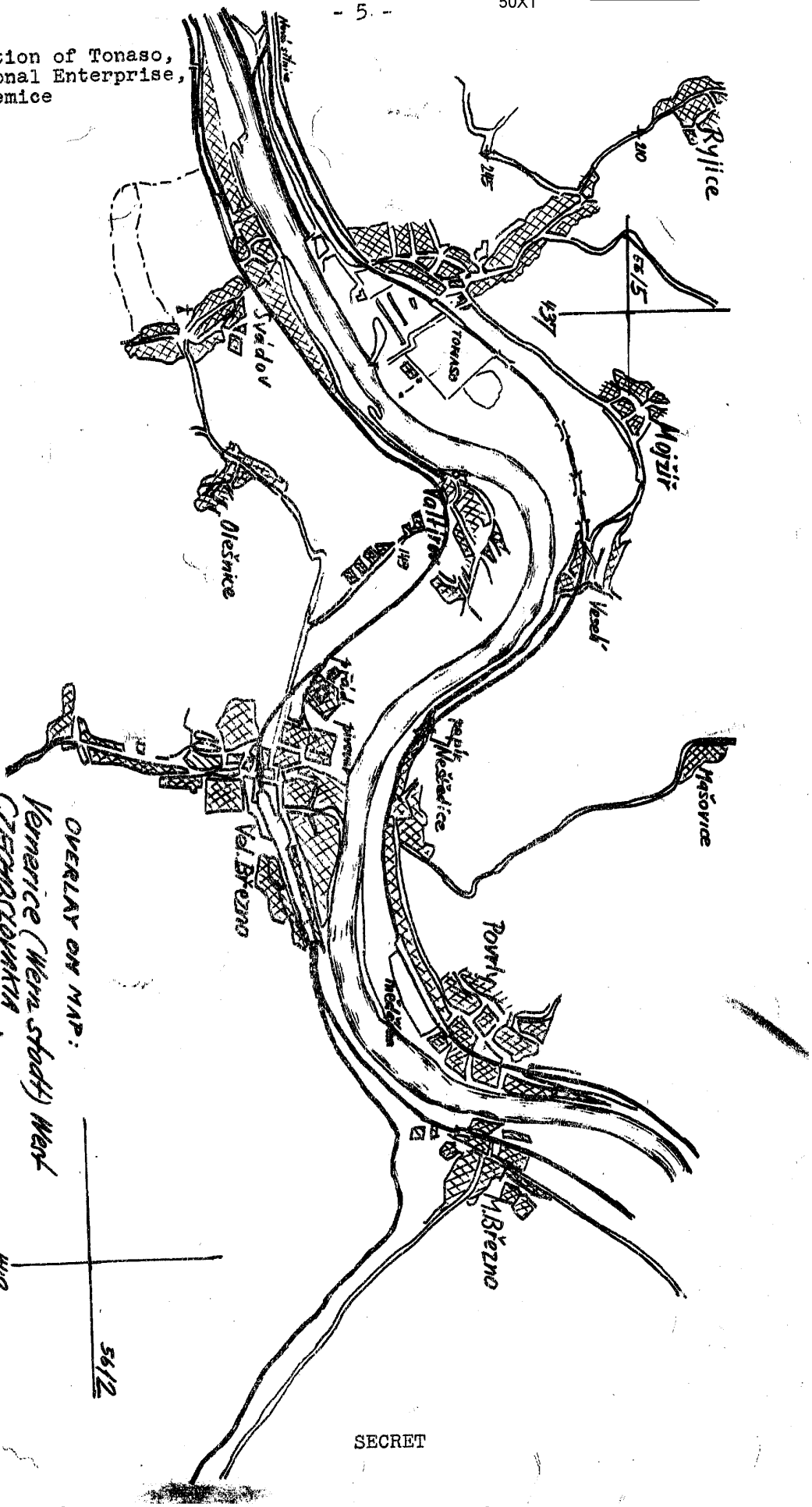
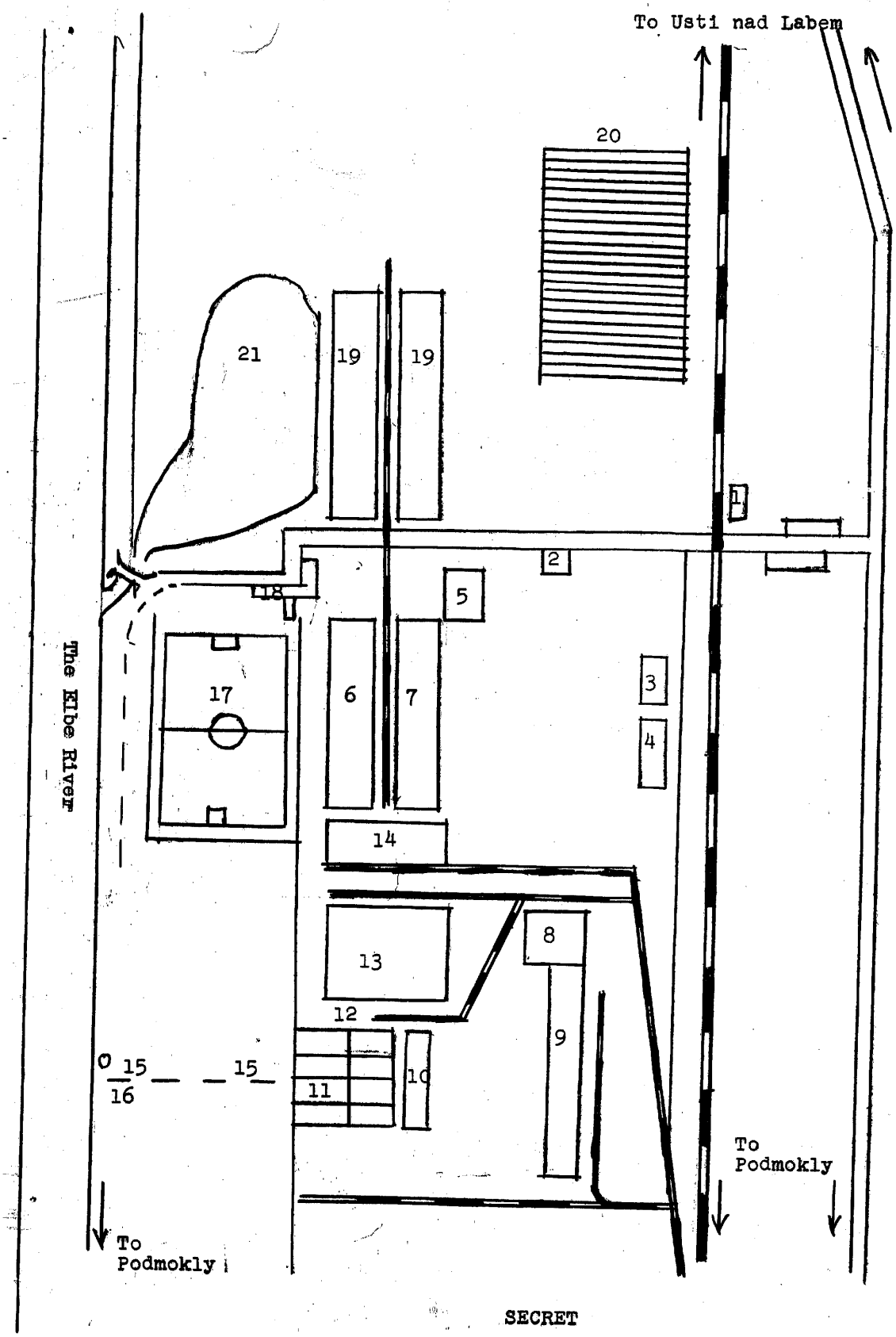
Annex A. Location of Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice



Annex B. Plant Layout of Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice



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LEGEND to Annex B (Plant Layout of Tonaso, National Enterprise, Nestemice)

Point # 1. Nestemice Railway Station

2. Gate: this entrance was guarded

3. Office Building: about 30 m. long; two stories high

4. Laboratory Building: about 50 m. long; two stories high

5. Wooden Building: used as a canteen and garage

6. Storage: for finished products

7. Storage: for finished products

8. Boiler House: about 40 x 40 m.; about five stories high

9. Production building

10. Cable way and Customs Guard Post

11. Storage Bins: concrete, open, and built into the earth; to store salt; eight bins in all, each about 25 x 10 m. and several meters deep; total capacity, 50,000 tn. of salt.

12. Storage Bin: metal; for storing salt solutions

13. Production Building

14. Production Building

15. Cable way: led to storage bins

16. Loading Platform: with crane

17. Athletic Field: used by the plant's sport club

18. Living Quarters: housing for the plant's foremen

19. Storage Facilities: in the area of the former sugar factory.

20. Old Buildings: of the former sugar factory.

21. Small Water Inlet: with loading installation for the former sugar factory